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Sent: Tue 8/4/2009 9:10:40 PM
Subject: Fw: C-WIN and CSPA deliver thorough water issue report to new Deputy Interior Secretary David Hayes
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From: California Water Impact Network <listmaster@sunnydayonline.com>
To: Carolyn Yale/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 08/04/2009 12:53 PM
Subject: C-WIN and CSPA deliver thorough water issue report to new Deputy Interior Secretary David Hayes

Embargoed for Release until 2 p.m., Monday, 3 August 2009.

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C-WIN and CSPA deliver thorough water issue report to new Deputy Interior Secretary David Hayes

August 2, 2009 —President Barack Obama appointed David Hayes to the Interior Department as Deputy Secretary—right-hand man to Secretary Kenneth Salazar—where he will resume work he began in the 1990s under then-President Clinton. He'll be Salazar's go-to man for California's water problems.

"We welcome David Hayes back to our water issues," says Carolee Krieger, Board President and Executive Director of the California Water Impact Network. "It is incredibly important the President appointed someone as knowledgeable about our problems as he is."

"But we want to make sure," adds Bill Jennings, Executive Director and Chairman of the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, "that Hayes hears more about these issues than what he gets from San Joaquin Valley farming interests and their members of Congress. So we prepared a briefing letter for him that gives him what he needs to ask tough questions of everyone around him."

The 14-page document, with tables and charts attached, deals with the Valley's water supply and quality issues; a Peripheral Canal around the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta; and the Bay Delta Conservation Plan process.

"We believe that current efforts to develop 'technological fixes' for salt and selenium-contaminated irrigated lands...are vehicles for delay; these technologies are not likely to be cost-effective for agriculture without federal government subsidy," wrote Krieger and Jennings.

"These lands should be retired permanently from irrigation; doing so would save taxpayer funds and contribute substantially to a more reliable water future for all other Central Valley water right holders and irrigators. Such increased reliability will in turn promote economic stability, and should be legislated to free up a large amount of water for environmental restoration in the Bay-Delta's Central Valley watershed."

A Bureau of Reclamation feasibility study of land retirement and source control options concluded the largest land retirement option—about 300,000 acres—was the most cost-effective alternative studied. However, the Bureau has to date ignored these results. Hayes oversees the Bureau's performance—hence the importance that C-WIN and CSPA contacted Hayes directly.

By retiring these high salt content lands in the western and southern San Joaquin Valley, "We believe that such solutions will free up enough water to make it unnecessary to build a Peripheral Canal or any new dams, while establishing these reallocated supplies at a fraction of the cost of these projects. By retiring as much as 1.3 million acres of land in the service areas of both the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, the Pacific Institute and other experts believe we can save as much as 3.9 million acre feet of water a year."

C-WIN and CSPA's letter provides state government farm employment data for the San Joaquin Valley in 2008 and 2009 and urges Hayes and the Interior Department to look past the headlines and the PR campaign marshaled by water-short areas of the Valley to gain public sympathy.

The letter points out that this part of the Valley is vexed by its low legal priority in water allocation, not regulations and court decisions protecting endangered fish in the Delta. The rest of the Valley is getting full water allocations this year from the Central Valley Project, the letter states. Farm employment overall has increased, not shrunk in the national recession.

"We find solutions that should be victories for both taxpayers and the environment," says C-WIN's Krieger. "There is enough water for every need in California, just not enough for greed."

C-WIN and CSPA also wrote to Hayes about the Peripheral Canal, giving numerous reasons a large list of reasons why the canal should not be built in the first place, and the harms it will cause to the Delta and San Francisco Bay if it is. Studies to date indicate that notbuilding a canal (or what is called "dual conveyance") would give beleaguered salmon and open water fisheries in the Delta the best chance of recovery in this century.

Krieger and Jennings wrote Hayes that, "C-WIN and CSPA see the Bay Delta Conservation Plan as a vehicle for delay for environmental and economic protection of the Delta, and is likely not to result in improvements for the fisheries it is seemingly to protect. It accomplishes this window dressing function by devising operational criteria by which the State Water Project and Central Valley Project export pumps in the Delta may pump while 'taking' (killing) individuals of endangered species with the authoritative blessing of a habitat conservation plan allowed under the Endangered Species Act."

The complete report is available at <http://www.c-win.org>.

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